

2014-2016 Draft History-Social Science Framework

Concerning the rows from 913th to 919th in page 469 of Chapter 15, Grade Ten – World History, Culture, and Geography: The Modern World,

South Korea says, " Comfort women were forced into prostitution as sexual slavery by the Japanese military during the World War II ." But the Japanese government can't find any evidence of it. The above Korean assertion is based on only EX-comfort women's verbal statements. And EX-comfort women's story doesn't have any conclusive evidence, as every time they speak, the story differs. It's unreliable.

On the other hand, we have the report drawn up on comfort women by U.S. Army Forces. If these comfort women had been victims of Japanese military, they wouldn't have complained of not being able to care for all guests, due to a tight schedule!! They wanted much more money, right? The details will be reported later.

What was happened actually? Many Korean women were mobilized to serve as comfort women by Korean agents connected with brothel owners. Some of the women were prostitutes, and some were daughters sold to those Korean agents for money by poor parents. The inducement used by these agents was plenty of money, an opportunity to pay off the family debts, easy work, and so on. On the basis of these false representations many women enlisted for overseas duty and were rewarded with an advance of a few hundred yen. Many brothel owners opened their business next to military gates, because they could make more money. The then Japanese authorities used to punish the brutal Korean agents, which appeared in the various newspapers.

The following is the official report by Psychological Warfare Team of OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION Attached to U.S. Army Forces India-Burma Theater;

PREFACE

This report is based on the information obtained from the interrogation of twenty Korean "comfort girls" and two Japanese civilians captured around the tenth of August, 1944 in the mopping up operations after the fall of Myitkyina in Burma. The report shows how the Japanese recruited these Korean "comfort girls", the conditions under which they lived and worked, their relations with and reaction to the Japanese soldier, and their understanding of the military situation.

PERSONALITY

The interrogations show the average Korean "comfort girl" to be about twenty-five years old, uneducated, childish, and selfish. She is not pretty either by Japanese or Caucasian standards. She is inclined to be egotistical and likes to talk about herself. Her attitude in front of strangers is quiet and demure, but she "knows the wiles of a woman." She claims to dislike her "profession" and would rather not talk either about it or her family. Because of the kind treatment she received as a prisoner from American soldiers at Myitkyina and Ledo, she feels that they are more emotional than Japanese soldiers. She is afraid of Chinese and Indian troops.

LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS

In Myitkyina the girls were usually quartered in a large two story house (usually a school building) with a separate room for each girl. There each girl lived, slept, and transacted business. In Myitkyina their food was prepared by and purchased from the “house master” as they received no regular ration from the Japanese Army. They lived in near-luxury in Burma in comparison to other places. This was especially true of their second year in Burma. They lived well because their food and material was not heavily rationed and they had plenty of money with which to purchase desired articles. They were able to buy cloth, shoes, cigarettes, and cosmetics to supplement the many gifts given to them by soldiers who had received “comfort bags” from home.

While in Burma they amused themselves by participating in sports events with both officers and men, and attended picnics, entertainments, and social dinners. They had a phonograph and in the towns they were allowed to go shopping.

PRIOR SYSTEM

The conditions under which they transacted business were regulated by the Army, and in congested areas regulations were strictly enforced. The Army found it necessary in congested areas to install a system of prices, priorities, and schedules for the various units operating in a particular areas. According to interrogations the average system was as follows:

1.Soldiers 10AM to 5PM 1.50yen 20 to 30 minutes

2.NCOs 5PM to 9PM 3.00yen 30 to 40 minutes

3.Officers 9PM to 12PM 5.00yen 30 to 40 minutes

The then Japanese Housekeeper's monthly income with a board meal is about 13 yen, so You can see that the comfort girls were highly paid.

SCHEDULES

The soldiers often complained about congestion in the houses. In many situations they were not served and had to leave as the army was very strict about overstaying. In order to overcome this problem the Army set aside certain days for certain units. Usually two men from the unit for the day were stationed at the house to identify soldiers. A roving MP was also on hand to keep order. Following is the schedule used by the “Kyoei” house for the various units of the 18th Division while at Naymyo.

Officers were allowed to come seven nights a week. The girls complained that even with the schedule congestion was so great that they could not care for all guests, thus causing ill feeling among many of the soldiers.

Soldiers would come to the house, pay the price and get tickets of cardboard about two inches square with the prior on the left side and the name of the house on the other side. Each soldier's identity or rank was then established after which he “took his turn in line”. The girls were allowed the prerogative of refusing a customer. This was often done if the person were too drunk.

PAY AND LIVING CONDITIONS

The “house master” received fifty to sixty per cent of the girls' gross earnings depending on how much of a debt each girl had incurred when she signed her contract. This meant that in an

average month a girl would gross about fifteen hundred yen. She turned over seven hundred and fifty to the “master”. Many “masters” made life very difficult for the girls by charging them high prices for food and other articles.

In the latter part of 1943 the Army issued orders that certain girls who had paid their debt could return home. Some of the girls were thus allowed to return to Korea.

The interrogations further show that the health of these girls was good. They were well supplied with all types of contraceptives, and often soldiers would bring their own which had been supplied by the army. They were well trained in looking after both themselves and customers in the matter of hygiene. A regular Japanese Army doctor visited the houses once a week and any girl found diseased was given treatment, secluded, and eventually sent to a hospital. This same procedure was carried on within the ranks of the Army itself, but it is interesting to note that a soldier did not lose pay during the period he was confined.

SOLDIERS REACTIONS

The average Japanese soldier is embarrassed about being seen in a “comfort house” according to one of the girls who said, “when the place is packed he is apt to be ashamed if he has to wait in line for his turn”. However there were numerous instances of proposals of marriage and in certain cases marriages actually took place.

All the girls agreed that the worst officers and men who came to see them were those who were drunk and leaving for the front the following day. But all likewise agreed that even though very drunk the Japanese soldier never discussed military matters or secrets with them. Though the girls might start the conversation about some military matter the officer or enlisted man would not talk, but would in fact “scold us for discussing such un-lady like subjects. Even Col. Maruyama when drunk would never discuss such matters.”

The soldiers would often express how much they enjoyed receiving magazines, letters and newspapers from home. They also mentioned the receipt of “comfort bags” filled with canned goods, magazines, soap, handkerchiefs, toothbrush, miniature doll, lipstick, and wooden clothes. The lipstick and cloths were feminine and the girls couldn’t understand why the people at home were sending such articles. They speculated that the sender could only have had themselves or the “native girls”.

When did Korean ex-comfort women start demanding compensation? In 1977, a Japanese man named Seiji Yoshida wrote a book which said that 200 local women were abducted by Japanese on Jeju-Island in Korea. He claimed he was one of the abductors. In 1989, his book was translated into Hangeul, or Korean language, and then the story was disseminated in South Korea. After the publication of the book in South Korea, 許榮善 who was a Korean reporter for The Seju-Island newspaper interviewed many local people there. But she couldn’t get any evidence of abduction.

The local Korean lady who was 85 years old said, “There are only 250 houses here. Were 200 young ladies abducted by Japanese? If only 15 people had been commandeered, it would have been a serious incident, but I haven’t heard such a story.”

Also in 1989, 金奉玉 who was a Korean historian said, “After researching into Yoshida’s story for a long time, I have come to the conclusion that Yoshida’s story is false, not true. Yoshida wrote the false story, as he was very business-minded, and wanted to earn money.” But his false story has been spread by The Asahi newspaper since 1983. And EX-comfort women started to ask for compensation.

As a matter of fact, in 1965, Japan-Korea Peace Treaty ended the possibility of future claims against Japan. Moreover, this meant any sort of claim, including unpaid wages of any profession during the days of colonization.

In 2003, The South Korean government's Ministry for Gender Equality estimated that 500,000 women worked in the national sex industry, though, according to the Korean feminist Association, the actual number might exceed 1 million. If that estimate is closer to the truth, it would mean 1 out of every 25 women in the country is selling her body for sex. South Korean government established the Antiprostitution Law in 2004. As a result, the number of Korean women looking for work as prostitutes abroad or being trafficked for the purpose is on the increase. Destinations for Korean sex workers are no longer limited to developed nations like the U.S., Canada, Australia and Japan. Korean police say the number of Korean women working in bars, karaoke clubs and massage parlors in countries like Thailand, Vietnam, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan is increasing. In 2013, there're about 270,000 prostitutes in South Korea.

By the way, the term Lai Daihan means a mixed ancestry person born to a South Korean father and a Vietnamese mother, and the fathers include both members of the South Korean military and Korean workers who were stationed in Vietnam during the Vietnam War. The exact number of Lai Daihan is unknown, but it is said that there are at least 5,000 and 30,000 at most. The South Korean military had massacred more than 300,000 Vietnamese people, in Vietnam during the War. During the war, South Koreans abducted and raped large numbers of Vietnamese women. Thus, the Lai Daihan problem includes, rape, and the desertion of the children. But Korea hasn't apologized to Vietnam for the Lai Daihan problem yet. It's not that Korean people respect women, but that they just want money. If it isn't so, Korea should apologize to Vietnam for the Lai Daihan problem, and should compensate immediately!

Thank you for your time and consideration
Takashi Kanazawa